Wing-Shadows of Fancy.

MRS. M. M. JOUVENAT.

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

Mrs. M. M. Jouvenat.

WING-SHADOWS OF FANCY.

MRS. M. M. JOUVENAT.

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DEDICATED

TO

PAUL AND MORRIS.

SALUTATORY.

Not always with a heart of eider down,
The sturdy mariner, though victor
Of a hundred storm-embattled voyages,
Essays again the ever-varying
Fortunes of the deep. And he
Whose pleasure's bark has only cruised along
Familiar shores, with the home-harbor safe
In view; whose only purpose was to watch
The moon-washed paddles drip their jeweled spray,
And drift with aimless dreams on aimless tides,
Is bold indeed to spread his untried sails
And dare the assaulting gales of alien skies,
Yet, those who press where angels fear to tread
Are also they whom proverbs say are lucky:
So with what grace of modesty I may,
I crave your kindly approbation.

NEIGHBORS.

High on a pantry shelf—by chance
Of careless maid, or circumstance,
Two vessels waited side by side,
Destined forgotten to abide.
The one of coarsest potters' clay
Made by some rude designer ;
The other—beautiful as day—
Of rarest Sevres china.

The dust fell over them in clouds ;
The spiders wove them grimy shrouds,
And sounds of merriment and woe
Thrilled them alike, they could not know
The dancing feet, or music sweet
From storm or stress of weather,
But every shock of hall or street
Jarred their poor sides together.

With chips and cracks, the dainty vase
Lost all its resonance and grace,
The ugly jug, opaque and dull,
Remained unscathed, 'till time was full.
Then one to menial use was called
And found its destined duty ;
While multitudes have stood enthralled
Before the other's beauty.

AFTER THE FIRE. SEE NEXT PAGE.

AFTER THE FIRE.

Softly the lambent beams
Of the moon in wavering streams,
Wash over the blackened wall—
On the charred rafters fall—
Of my lost home.
In silence the swaying trees
Beckon with bending knees,
Some viewless form to come.

Softly the shadows creep
Where the cindered lintels sleep,
And fumble at the door ;
But nowhere on step or floor
Of my deserted home,
Is the sound of a footfall heard
Or echo of whispered word,
From room to room.

In the lorn and lonely night
The unaccustomed light
Searches the haggard place
In vain, for the vanished grace
Of my lost home ;
While a bird on the chimney high
Shrills in mad ecstacy
With never a note of doom.

Oh, bird on the chimney tall,
Thy notes with the moonbeams fall,
And mingle with my dreams,
Faintly their cadence seems
With anguish stirred ;
But what, in thy ecstacy,
Are broken hearts to thee—
Oh, mocking mocking-bird ?

DECEMBER.

The old year with its woes,
Fast verges to a close,
But e'er its dying throes,
We, too, may pass.

Ah, weary heart and sore,
There waits beside your door
The rest you oft implore,
And yet, alas!

Ah, yet, although I see
How sweet that rest may be
When close it bends to me,
I shrink and sigh.

I shrink with some vague sense
Of effortless defense
At life's inconsequence,
I know not why.

Heartsick with life's defeat;
Longing the dead to meet;
I know it will be sweet
To rest and die.

ONLY A THRUSH.

All day in the gleaming corn
From the dewy milk-white morn,
'Till the evening star is born :

The crickets' cheery call,
Albeit soft and small,
Loud on mine ear doth fall ;

For I long for one bold bright look
At the sun, and cannot brook
The crickets' low rebuke.

I watch the lark as he swings
In the high dim dawn and sings,
Like a star with silvery wings ;

But tho' in my deep delight
I fain would follow his flight—
I never can reach his height—

So I flit with restless cry
The fruit fringed meadows by,
And vex that I cannot die ;

While all day long in the corn
I hear with bitter scorn
The cricket's humble horn.

AT EVENING.

TO MRS. A. M. G.

My day is done :
Beyond the portals of its sunset fringe
I see the advancing gloom.
Along the paths which I have come
Lie faded dreams, and fragments
Of the hopes I chased—
And scorned. Around on every side
I see the fadeless glory
Of a changeless change ;
No storm of memory's pain
Swells to my heart, or breaks
In rain upon my moveless face.
The burdens I have borne
Have ceased to gall ; the sorrows
I have known no more enthrall.
The scales of hope and dread
Pause in a pulseless breath,
And destiny in equipoise
Stands waiting.

"ROBIN'S AWA."

What matters all the summer's prescient splendor
Her myriad roses—her glad plenitudes
Of rilling streams that echo softly tender
The bird-calls heard at eve in dim, deep woods ?
What matters *all life's* gorgeous pageantry
To sightless vision and unheeding ear ?
Aye, "what's this dull world to me :
Robin's not here."

NOT TO BE.

There was a rose whose matchless grace
My soul's far-seeing eyes could trace,
But e'er upon the air was shed
Its fragrant breath, the rose was dead.
And what, though countless roses blow,
If this lost scent no more I know?
And so the notes of some sweet bird,
By waiting fancy only heard—
Still to my ears the cadence sweet
The phantom echoes oft repeat,
And still my dreaming heart is thrilled
By hopes that perish unfulfilled.

REST.—A SONNET.

Come rest with me; the tireless days go on
And the fierce tropics of a busy life as yet
Abate not of their fury:—come forget
Awhile the fevered hopes, so often known
Like fleeting stars, to vanish one by one;
And calm the leaping pulse, the foaming brain;
Within the haven, where I dwell alone.
O, nevermore to me, shall come the pain
Of unexpected grief; nor ecstacy
Of joy, which verges pain. Apart from these
Cool shadows,—sorrow-born, but yielding peace
Surround me; I hold within my memory
In waveless calm,—the sorrow and the bliss
Of sainted days:—O, then, come rest with me.

THE HONEY OF POISON FLOWERS

Has the spell of the siren found you,
Heart of gold?
Has her sorcery crept around you,
Fold on fold?
'Till the eerie glance that won you
Pierced your breast?
Has the wine of her smile undone you
And mocked at your vague unrest?

Ah! well that the cup you tasted
Scarce touched your lip:
For your veins are fever-wasted
With that brief sip.
Yet you long in your maddened hours
To drink your fill
Of the "honey of poison flowers,
And all its measureless ill."

MIGNONETTE.

I send you a sprig of mignonette
Such as haunted our grandmother's dreams
And I often wonder if we do not get,
More of fragrance than sometimes seems
Was old nature's first intent.
If the seed of some treasured old bouquet;
(Relic of heart-broken sentiment)
May not have wandered to our late day
With the garnered sweets of an old romance,
The lover's kiss—the secret tear;
And give this flower we hold so dear
A new significance.

SUNSET.

There's a picture now before me
Of a forest lone and deep,
'Tis dusk in this woodland hoary
The world is sinking to sleep.

I see the birds come flocking
Seeking for shelter and rest,
While the harsh night winds are rocking
The boughs round their icy nest.

The trackless snow lies over
The winding old roadbed,
And a fox comes out of his cover
With slow and stealthy tread.

His sharp keen nose is lifted,
His brush is trailing low ;
He creeps where the snow lies drifted,
Noiselessly, soft and slow.

Cling close, little birds, together
On your chilly perch to night,
While I vainly question whether
This law of life is right.

Tell me O, wisdom teachers
Why guiltless blood is shed ?
That stronger, baser creatures
May be comforted and fed.

And what do the little children say?
Shall the snow be stained with red
Or the whelps of the cruel beast of prey
Go supperless to bed?

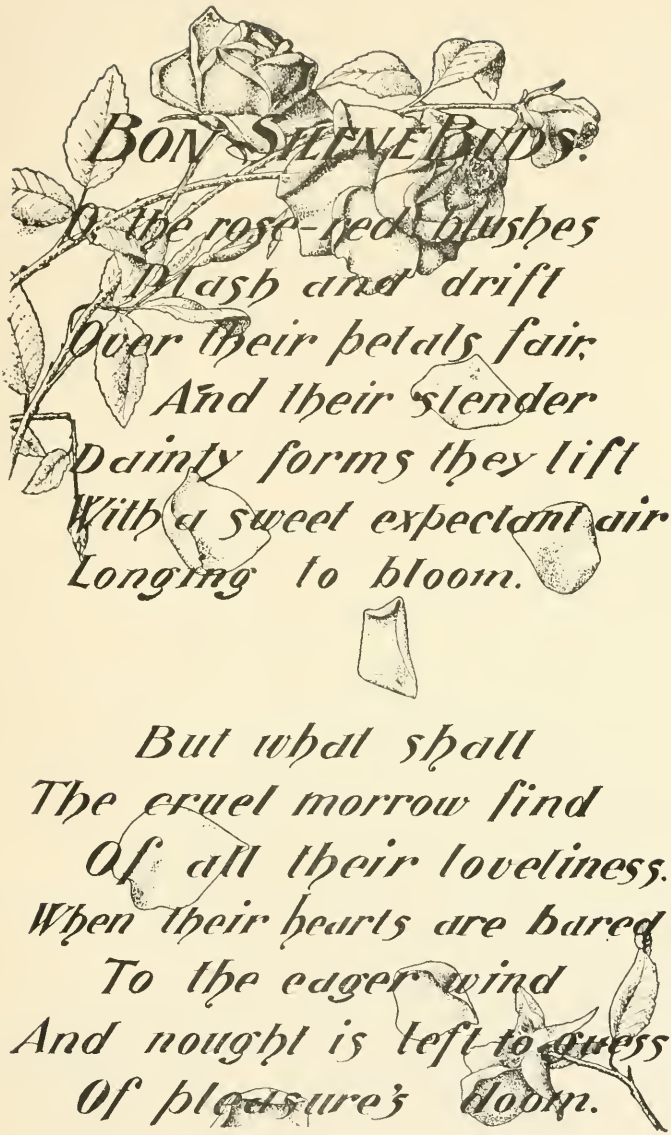
TO LONELINESS.

To thee my bosom friend and mate,
These pilgrim lines I dedicate ;
O, thou to whom my voiceless cry
Was uttered, and whose sole reply
Was silence,—let me take
Thy hand, and never more forsake
The purple shadows, and the peace
Of thy sweet paths. Lo ! on my knees
I breathe my utter thankfulness—
For sorrows masked with power to bless
For poverty, and pain and woe,
And toil, and many a friendly foe
Whose kind unkindness dealt the stroke
That loosed my fetters, and awoke
The formless purposes that lay
Folded in sepulture away.
O, Solitude, no more I shrink
From the sad cup 'tis mine to drink.
Fain would I let *all* sorrow be
My badge of immortality.

TO A FRIEND.

WITH SOME WILD DAISES.

Think of me while daises bloom,
In thy heart find me sweet room.
Let no distant parting doom,
Dim those perfect days with gloom.
Keep for me like faint perfume,
Gentle thoughts while daises bloom.



BON-SILENE BUDS.

O the rose-red blushes
Flash and drift
Over their petals fair,
And their slender
Dainty forms they lift
With a sweet expectant air
Longing to bloom.

But whal shall
The eruel morrow find
Of all their loveliness.
When their hearts are bared
To the eager wind
And nought is left to guess
Of pleasure's doom.

OUR NAMELESS NATION.

Read at the laying of the corner stone of Confederate Monument in Sherman, Texas, April 3rd, 1893.

I know a land whose story
Of sacrifice and pain,
Dwells in pathetic glory
Like some remembered strain,
Whose notes forever flying
Repeat their sacred themes
In sighing echoes, dying,
And fading into dreams.

O, loved and vanished nation
Nameless and lost for aye ;
With loving iteration,
With carven stone and bay,
With monumental splendor
Thy memory we bless,
Though vain our hope to render
The fulgor of success.

Long shall the deathless story
Be told of the young and brave
Who sleep in tragic glory
In many a nameless grave ;
And long shall this land be cherished
In her children's loving hearts—
Though her boundaries have perished
From human maps and charts.

For the blood that flowed like a river
And sank in the earth away
Is part of her sod forever,
And throbs in our veins to-day,

And long as the skies' soft arches
Are panoplied with gold
The thrill of those gallant marches
The deeds of those heroes bold—

Shall swell in our heart's devotion
And grow as the leaves unfold,
'Till our sunny land by the ocean
Shall stand 'mid the nations old,
And the fame of that nameless nation
On history's page shall shine
As our heroes' grand oblation
In our hearts has found a shrine.

A VALENTINE.

How does Cupid live, and where?
Hides he in my lady's hair?
Drinks he nectar from the cup
Of the crocus lifted up?
Does his voice in odor swell
From the bells of Asphodel?
Violets are love's own flower
And they whisper of his power.
O, beware! The trap is laid,
Cupid waits in ambuscade;—
Every sunbeam sparkling nigh
But reflects his laughing eye.
See the rose my lady wears
With the cruel thorn it bears;
Ah! 'twas Cupid with his dart
And its pain has pierced my heart.

ILLUSION.

You pass me every little while
"Mrs. Glower."—
Your square-set jaws and acrid smile
Would fain devour

A creature whom you so despise—
But 'tis not I—
The thing you scathe with loathing eyes
Is poverty.

My real self you do not know,
You only see
The tangled skeins of toil and woe
That compass me.

If life were all a summer sea
Then would my face
An image fair and placid be
And full of grace.

But like some view through dim sea caves
I meet your glance—
Distorted in the broken waves
Of circumstance.

A VALENTINE.

WITH A FLOWER.

Take this little pretty pansy
Lady fair,
Let it dwell in thy sweet fancy
Light as air.

Shed the dayshine of thy smiling
On its head,
It will bless in such beguiling
Sunlight fled.

NEURALGIA.

In an effort vain to conquer the pain
Assaulting my shuddering senses,
I call for a lotion, or some deadly potion
To hinder its headlong advances.

Then like the echo dim of a wordless hymn
Falls the sibilant sound of chloral—
But what profit to weep when instead of my sleep
Comes the dawn of a vision auroral?

I sway and swing like a birdless wing
On wanton breezes sailing—
I float—I float like an oarless boat
With my hair in the eddies trailing.

Like the sounds that swell in a tongueless bell
That rings with its own vibrations,
My senses swim in a swirling dream
With a thousand wild gyrations.

Ah, I faint at the brink, where I fain would drink
For my hot lips are famished with fever,
I am groping in quest of that endless rest
That shall quiet my pain forever.

EN RAPPORT.

Stately and tall and lonely,
The pines tell their secrets only
To the starry dusk and me.
But ever, and ceaselessly,
I hear in their murmured tones
The voices of absent ones.

O, COME SWEET FLOWER.

When youth and dawn and glad June days
Their golden chimes are ringing ;
When hope's high noon with sweet delays
Withholds his flight from winging ;
Before one blighting breath is blown
Upon our perfect blisses—
O, come sweet flower, the moment crown
With blushes born of kisses.

CHORUS.—O, come sweet flower and bloom
And crown life's glad behest,
In pleasure's hour or sorrow's gloom,
Come die upon this breast.

When still at last, this broken heart
On death's cold bier is lying ;
When winged pain with poisoned dart
Finds sweet surcease in dying ;
When staunched for aye the anguished wound
With roses softly weeping—
O, come sweet flower, thy place is found
Where pain and joy lie sleeping.

CHORUS—O, come, etc.

VALENTINE.

Deep in my heart's serenest depths I look
Perchance some unfamiliar lineaments to trace ;
But like a jewel in some limpid brook
I see thy face.

MESSAGE OF THE FLOWERS.

(Lines accompanying a bouquet of roses and violets sent to Mrs. M. L. Nash.)

If to our dull prosaic souls
No sweet mysterious hope unrolls,
When the soft petals of the rose
Their carmine-tinted lips disclose ;
If from the violet's pleading eyes
No hints prophetic of the skies
To our insensate hearts arise,
Nor breaks upon our dumb despair
In odorous pulses of the air,
The rhythmic measure of a prayer ;
If flowers may bloom, and wax and wane
Nor cheat our human hearts of pain,
The world is beautiful in vain.

"VERS DE SOCIETE."

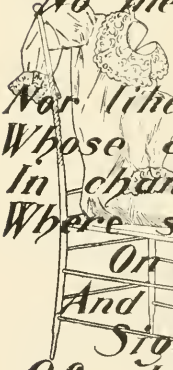
WITH SOME FLOWERS.

I have no rare and gorgeous things
To bear upon their fragrant wings
The messages I fain would send ;
To be of thought the argosy—
The medium of apology,
And for my lack to make amend.
So let this simple group of bloom
Propitiate the sprites of gloom
And bear in modest guise for me
The intent of a courtesy.

AN OLD DRESS—A REVERIE

This is the darling dress
That knew his last caress,
This is the happy lace
That trembled near his face,
Here on this velvet
Blushing softly red
Once dwelt the shadow
Of his dear dark head.

O, could this dumb-mane-
Blest fabric share my pain
As it has shared my joy
'Twere better to destroy
With purpose swift,
So that its ashen heap
Of formless dust,
No memories might keep.



Nor like the mirrored face
Whose agony I trace
In changing lineaments
Where silent slow suspense
On shrunken cheek
And lip and fading hair
Signals the story
Of a life's despair

VANISHED.

A DANCE MEMORY.

If only that soft refrain
Would cease in my heart and brain ;
If the faded scent of mignonette,
And the odor of withered clover,
Would ever be over ;
If the vision of Fate's grim silhouette,
I could forget.

If she had not been so fair,
As she winnowed the fragrant air ;
With her drowsy wonder of misty lace,
While the music's languid mazes,
In dim somnolent phrases,
Swooned round the dread enchanted space,
That rimmed her face.

Or yet if those lips of wine,
Had ever been mine :
If I had not trifled as one gone daft,
And held the coveted chalice away,
With a connoisseur's delay,
As one who knows that at one rich draught
It could be quaffed.

But ever that old refrain,
Throbs on in my heart and brain,
With the haunting odor of mignonette;
And a vision of vanished grace,
Thrills in the empty space,
And fills the paths where all my thoughts are set
With vague regret.

THOU AND I.

TO EDNA.

Morning for thee with the blowing
Of south winds soft and sweet ;
Of sunrises mellow and glowing
And bright paths to beckon thy feet ;
Morning for thee with the glory
Of ships sailing out to the West,
The joy of an untold story,
Thrilling within thy breast.

Evening for me, with its reaches
Of barren and shadowy vales,
Its storm-swept and desolate beaches,
The glimmer of farewell sails ;
Morning for thee with the gladness
Of hope that eternal springs—
Evening for me with the sadness
Of twilight and folded wings.

POST PRANDIAL.

It's the interval that tells
In the beating of the heart,
And the sweetest music swells
In the pauses of its measure ;
The deepest thoughts that start
Throng the hyphen of the night,
And we find the dearest pleasure
In the fugitive delight,
Of the witching hour that waits,
When a presence we resign,
And we dare the tempting fates
With the walnuts and the wine.

EXILES.

Gone are the birds that chirped and swung
Out in the trees, where their high nests hung.

The wind that listless, idled here
Storms by and passes otherwhere.

Dark shadowy forms in the wintry sky
Utter their lorn discordant cry.

Far from the old Egyptian stream
The lotus lilies stand and dream.

The orchid flower in the greenhouse nigh
Exhales its soul in a tropic sigh.

The singing notes of a voice long gone
Pass and repeat and echo on.

And the haunting breath of a dead June day
In the old rose walk is still astray.

While the lonely longing heart of me
Goes wandering in quest of thee.

ON THE BEACH.

Sea-weed and empty shell
That loved the ocean well,
    Forsaken lie ;—
And treacherous fawning waves
Crawl over their hidden graves,
Foam-flecked and sullenly
They creep from the maddened sea
Creep to the shore and me,
    To die.

YOUR PICTURE.

[To an unseen correspondent.]

Your cheeks are like the roses that abound—
Beneath the snow.,
Your voice has all the music that is found—
In a crow ;
Your eyes like purple sapphires scintillate,
(Sin till late),
And your pretty retrousse nose aspires
Toward your pate; (your pretty pate)
You're graceful as a willow in the wind ;
You're constant as a billow, and as kind ;
And I'll bet a half a nickle
You are nothing if not fickle
In your mind.

DO YOU CARE?

Do you care for the rosebuds, so tender,
That shed their sweet lives in your sight?
Do you care for the lilies' soft splendor,
The jessamine's languid delight?
Or is nature's domain all too slender
A suitable homage to render
To you, in your beauty and might?

Do you care to remember the vision
Of dusk with its fire-fly gleams ?
Have you nothing but scorn and derision
For the past, and the lost, as it seems ;
For tears that without act of volition
Rain down on the memories elysian
Of days that lived only in dreams?

LITTLE BLUEBIRD.

Ah! little bluebird, is it you?
Thrilling the dawn and my sad soul through,
Filling my dark and lonely room
With phantom roses and faint perfume,
A winged shred of summer sky
Flitting by?

The gray of winter is over the land,
And sorrow and I sit hand in hand;
But one blithe note from your tiny throat
And visions of spring in fancy float,
And the wings of hope in my breast are stirred
By one sweet bird.

Throw the dark curtained portals wide,
Let in the flood of memory's tide;
Awake to the call of a warbling strain
The old time joy, the old time pain,
And swift on thought and wing will fly
Bluebird and I.

UNSEVERED.

Over the waters white and wide
Thou and I—
Through flash and foam of the billowy tide
Blithly fly.
Prow in the darkling deep,
Spars mid the starbeams sweep,
Dearest, together we stand
Faring forth,
Thou in the spirit land,
I on earth.

THE RED, RED ROSE.

TO THE THIRTEEN YOUNG LADIES OF CLASS '93, SHERMAN INSTITUTE

Hope's dial marks the hour of noon,
This glad Columbian year ;
And red, red roses crown the June
Henceforth to memory dear.
The year,—The Country,—and your youth
Each one fair summer find,
So let "ill omens" pass, forsooth
Auspicious fate is kind.

'Tis true no signal from beyond
Gleams far, life's billows over,
Nor messages to prayers respond,
The future to discover.
Yet not unguided shall your mind
Seek paths of grand endeavor,
By no "pent Uticas" confined
But led by freedom ever.

The red, red rose in days of old
Was famed in song and story,
Since Lancaster the brave and bold,
Bathed it in crimson glory.
Then wear "the rose of victory"
With no thought of compunction,
Your motto, "God and our country"
All one benign conjunction.

And year by year while the roses bloom
You will learn where the thorns are hid,
And will often come in the dusky gloom
As sweet "Meh Lady" did—
To gather red roses fresh and free,
While dew-drops their petals cumber,
And feel that long ago, '93
Made THIRTEEN a "lucky number."

BABY JOHN.

A PEN PICTURE.

Like flakes astray from summer skies,
The azure of his baby eyes ;
Fine as spun silk, and chestnut brown,
The hair that shades his baby crown.
His cheeks, so downy and so rosy ;
His mouth, as fragrant as a posey,
Beneath his cunning little nosey.
And as he lies so warm and cosey,
With wink and yawn so sleepy-dozy,
From top of crown to tiny toesy:
The sweetest flower the sun shines on
Is baby John.

THREE NEPHEWS.

AFTER A VISIT.

I wonder where the boys are gone ;
James, and Troy, and John !
Sometimes the days seem very long
With no one to care for a baby song,
No one to care for fairy tales,
No one to dabble in water pails,
No one to romp and make a noise.
O, what has become of the little boys !

I once had three little boys of my own,
Whose bright eyes like the starlight shone.
They had rosy cheeks and voices sweet,
And merry the music of their glad feet.
But the beard now grows where the roses grew,
And the same will happen some day to you,
And out in the world you will soon be gone :
James, and Troy, and John.

IMPERISHABLE LOVE.

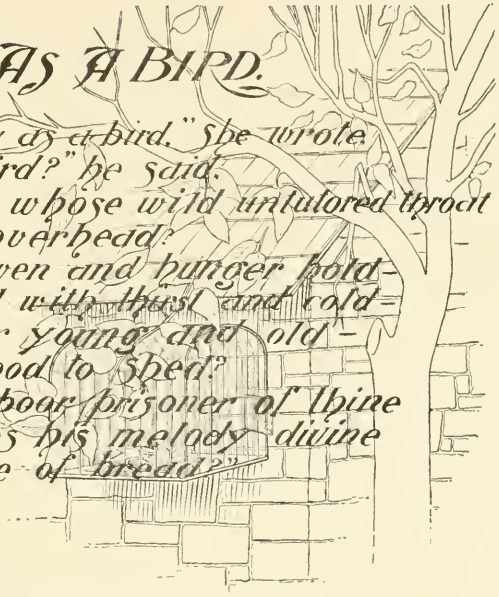
I looked on the maiden form
  Of one, who long had lain
Embalmed from the greed of worm :
  Shut from the realm of pain,
Whose eyes were sealed from tears
In a tomb,—three thousand years.

Her jeweled hands were crossed
  Over her pulseless breast,
But the bloom of her cheek was lost ;
  And her lips—once love-carressed
Smiled not, nor answered me
In my anguished inquiry.

"Oh, where is the love immortal,
  That found and crowned thee,
Can it not burst the portal
  Of death's eternity ?
Or where is the love that once
Thrilled thee with glad response?"

O, quiet breast forever—
  You prophesy,
And to life's longing fever
  Make grim reply.
The lips of love—the grieving tears
Are silent—these three thousand years.

AS A BIRD.



"I'm happy as a bird," she wrote.
"What bird?" he said.
"The one whose wild untutored throat
Trills overhead?
Storm-driven and hunger pinched,
Famished with thirst and cold,
Target for young and old,
His blood to shed?
Or that poor prisoner of thine
Who gives his melody divine
For dole of bread?"

Long after, once again
She wrote, in altered strain:
"O, would that I
Might claim to be
As happy now as my sweet bird
Whose captive song my life has cheered,
That I might lie,
Restful as he,
Under the shadowy eaves,
Low where the drifting leaves
Cover him o'er!
In his lone bed,
Sun heat and winter rain,
Hunger and prison pain
Find him no more:
My bird is dead!

APRIL MUSINGS.

The locusts are in bloom,
  Their whiteness 'mid the green
Waves in Spring's magic loom,
  Like shuttles out and in.

I see the sunset sky
  Banked high with windy clouds;
O'er the darkening world they lie
  Like grim prophetic shrouds.

The lonely night comes down
  And folds me 'round and 'round;
The noises of the town
  Add to my gloom profound.

I think of those who live
  With children at their knee;
And I scarcely can believe
  'Twas ever so with me.

I shrink from every hand,—
  I close and bolt the door.—
'Tis fate that I should stand
  Alone forevermore.

TEXAS (NEBULÆ.)

As the red-cinctured suns unroll
Their cooling vapors scroll on scroll,
When chrystalized and rigid rings
A menace to their freedom flings,
  And hurled far out to orbits new
A thousand glittering tangents fly ;
Crushed and cast out, but not to die,
  (For chaos yields to order true.)
And glorious spheres of light and grace
Emerge to claim an honored place,
While gracious seasons circling round
Unveil life's mysteries profound.

  The clouds lift up, the dews descend,
Bland seas, and fair redundant fields
Their joy to sentient beings yields
  And all benignant uses blend.
So our fair land, the heritage
Of every race, of every age,
A nation wrought of fragments torn
From strife when liberty was born.
  Beacon of every instinct free,
Drift of the passing world's erosion,
Shrine of the exile's wrapt devotion,
  A grand mosaic entity.

THE BROTHERHOOD OF MAN.

How terrible the strife
For only bread.
Is this the all of life,
To be not dead?

Yet never to take a hand
From the driven task,
Reaching to those who stand
And idly ask.

No, not a moment's time
Have we to spare,
Need is the sire of crime!
We may not share,

Half of your loaf with those
Who wait and want,
Lest the same squalid woes
Our future haunt.

This is the worldling's creed,
Let ME have plenty first;
When I have gorged my greed
And slaked my thirst

With life's benignant wine—
When all it is to live
To surfeit has been mine,
Then I will pause—and give.

THE STAR.

A myriad blushing roses bloom
Where erst the wilderness was spread,
And ploughshares flash where through the gloom
The poisoned arrow lately sped.
Across the plains with silent haste
Magnetic messengers are thrilling
Through fields where wild and fruitless waste
Her thistle-ermined robes were trailing.
No sounds more hostile greet the ear
Than herdsmen's jocund laughter,
The jibes of larks and robins clear
And echoes flying after.

A magic mesh of roads and rails
Their wooing vistas kindly lend,
Dim is the web of savage trails
Where the bold strides of progress wend.
We stand in this penumbra fair
Between the old life and the new
Between its ceaseless ebb and flow,
A fate invincible to dare.
The seer sees despite our fears
A destiny of proud prediction,
In rounded symmetry of years,
Beyond the poet's wildest fiction.

ASHES OF ROSES.

A letter, yellow and old and worn ;
Wrinkled with age, with handling torn,
Holding some faded buds forlorn,
Carefully hid from eyes of scorn.

The words were words of the long ago,
Which the hand that wrote would scarcely know
As like the truth as the flowers that blow,
Are like these poor buds crumbling so.

While I with sadly drooping head
Pondered the words so often read,
The weary past looked up and said,
"Ah, why not let me bury my dead?"

Earth to earth, with many a tear,
Hands that were living and warm and dear
Were folded to rest full many a year,
While you lay quietly folded here.

"Ashes to ashes and dust to dust,"
Fulfiill your doom as mortals must,
Who die like you, save that they trust
In God, both merciful and just.

HEART-HUNGRY.

When the spring rain, slowly drifting
To the earth from a wintry sky
Suddenly shifting, dreamily lifting,
Like a veil some hand puts by ;
And I see the grass-green rippling far
In a wild race over the hills,
I welcome the prophet—"the eastern star,"
Of nature's benificent wills.

When the last of the March winds, peeping
From his ambush wild with fear,
All at once leaping, the dry brush sweeping—
Scuttles by like a frightened deer ;
And I see the rose-red blossoms blow,
Chasing the vanquished gloom,
Then hope, wing-weary, stoopeth low,
To bathe in this mortal bloom.

When eyes that have lost beaming
In the hopeless lapse of years,
Waking or dreaming, still streaming
With a silent fall of tears,—
Shall see thro' the mist of an earthly clime,
A rift in the gloom of space,
Beyond the prison bars of time ;
O, then, shall I see thy face.

MOTHER'S REST.

"O, I'm so tired," mother said,
"I need a good long rest,
Away from Nannie, and Jim, and Ted,
And the baby at the breast.
Since Nellie went off to school with Sue,
I have more clothes to make,
I really have too much to do,
Nor time a breath to take."

"When baby is old enough to wean
I mean to go away
For one whole month just like a queen,
And have a holiday.
Nellie and Sue can take my place,
The boys are little men ;
Nannie can wash her own wee face
'Till I come back again."

And so, when summer came once more
The trip was fully planned,
But there was much to do before
She pressed each little hand
And held them all close to her heart,
And kissed them all "good-bye."
Poor mother found it hard to part,
And just began to cry.

But father put her on the train,
And all their kisses waved ;
And letters told her oft again
How well they all behaved.
But e'er the first two weeks were past
The mother restless grew,

And father brought her back at last
Before her trip was through.

And when with laughter mixed with tears
She kissed them all around.
"I feel like I've been gone for years,
And now can settle down.
O, I'm so tired!" once more she cried,
Stroking each darling head,
But when they stared with eyes so wide,
"*Tired of resting*," mother said.

TWO LITTLE GRANDDAUGHTERS

Whose little blue eyes are these,
If you please?
One, two, three, four,
Are there any more?
See the dainty cheeks and noses,
Sweet as roses;
Whose are they any how,
I'd like to know!

Here's a precious, smiling, cute
Little "snoot,"
And another just its mate
And duplicate.
Now, who are these tiny girlies two,
Say, who!
Why, who but little Minnie May
And Doris Gay!

TO ALBYN.

That pretty Scottish name of thine
Descended from an ancient line,
  Of Celtic ancestry ;
Proud as the Alp it signifies,
And spotless as the snow that lies
  On Alpine heights eternally.

Guard well that heritage, my friend,
That it unblemished may descend
  To bless humanity.
May no sad wrecks bestrew thy path
To be the ghastly aftermath
  Of heedless vanity.

PALE ASPHODELS.

TO LOUISE, ON THE DEATH OF HER BABE.

O, soft the death bloom sleeps
  Upon his pallid lips ;
On his sweet eyes a shadow lies,
  The gloom of hope's eclipse.
His last low sobbing breath
  To silence has been given.
We yield his tender form to death,
  His life from ours is riven.
Yet speak not of farewells,
  And count him not as dead,
But plant the bells of asphodels
  Above his lowly bed.

SILENCE.

IN MEMORY OF MRS. M. L. NASH.

The skies are dim to-day,
And grim and gray ;
And everywhere the atmosphere
Seems wan and palpable and drear.
The gaunt and leafless trees
Stand shadowless.
Hushed bird and bee, their minstrelsy,
The world seems lost in reverie.

Farewell ! Life's argosy
Drifts out to sea.
In vain we stand upon the strands
And hold outstretched and pleading hands
She who majestic lies,
With darkened eyes,
Now sees the farther mysteries
Beyond life's brief parenthesis.

The flowers she held so dear
We shall revere :
And for her sake will not forget
The daisy's bloom, the mignonette ;
Will love the daffodil,
The bluebird's trill;
Sweet scent and song like censer swung,
Some old cathedral aisles among.

But spring will soon repeat
Its bourgeon sweet,
And tapestries of bloom shall weave
Their canopy above her grave.

"TAKE ME."

In memory of little Marguerite Hopson, born Christmas Day, 1887. Died November 26, 1892.

Gay holly on the wall,—
Dark leaf and scarlet berry,—
Cedar scent by hearth and hall,
And glad hearts doubly merry.
A mother smiles at rest,
And in her happy arms,
Safe from the world's alarms,
A treasured infant lies,
With dark unfathomed eyes,
A welcome Christmas guest.

O, but the years were fleet
In which to know her sweetness;
The music of her feet
Made all of life's completeness.
Holiday was in her heart;
All her sunny life along.
Echoes of her childish song
Aching memories repeat.
But the name, sweet Marguerite,
Dwells in sorrow's crypt, apart.

A day of anguished grief;
Death every hope defying;
Now—the memory of her brief
And patient words—replying,
Will never more forsake thee,
Nor that her latest thought,
She turned all pain distraught,
To one sweet place of rest,
Her mother's loving breast,
And whispered faintly, "take me."

Sad mother, some far day,
When weary with long pain
And sorrow and delay,
Her voice may come again
From life's poor dream to wake thee.
Then from pale lips the prayer
For rest and heavenly care,
"O, safe from death's alarms,
To thine eternal arms,
O, Father, 'Take me.' "

SORROW.

FOR LITTLE LILLIAN.

Like some pale blossom she lies,
Listless and withered ;
Cover and close her sweet eyes,
Lillian is dead.

* * * * * * *

O, many a morning shall break
And find her away ;
For vainly we call her, to wake
And come to her play.

Vainly we call, but no word
Answers again ;
Only an echo is heard
Mocking our pain.

Ah, never a bird-note shall trill
Or sweet south wind stir,
But memory will listen and thrill
And whisper of her.

MEMORIAL JUNE.

The rippling measure of an old time song,
The gay glad notes of summer birds and bees,
All day their quivering cadences prolong ;
And always in my heart, as on the fleeing breeze,
In lonely dreams, or where crowds gaily press,
I hear the echo of a name—forever answerless.

Whether above lone wandering autumn streams
The storm-swept gull his circling shadow flings,
Or where o'er summer pools a prismic shower gleams
When bathing birds dip their sun-burnished wings,
Or where pale lily-lips lie breathless from the day,
And on the icy rimpled waves the rime lies wan and gray ;
'Tis always June—for all the past is June.
My weary feet and dull unseeing eyes
Pass on unheeding. All my thoughts have flown
And followed far, 'neath brooding southern skies,
Where fled the waves that saw his last sad gaze,
Where willows grope in pallid streams to find the vanished face !

* * * * *

I see indeed the outward joy that strays
Along the perfumed limits of the days ;
Yet mark, against the glowing sky
An empty nest, storm-tossed and high,
In leafless branches swinging.
And to the joyless nest no bird—
As to my hopeless heart no word—
Its glad home-flight is winging.

* * * * *

O, gay mosaic sun and bloom discloses !
O, laughter wet with tears behind June roses !

The affluent splendor of your glories bring
And lay on Pain's pale lips your offering.
Enwreathe the clay-capped billows in the mould ;
The tempest track of human grief enfold ;
O, vain intrigue of brightness, bloom and moss :
Over ALL is agloom the spirit of longing and loss.

KARNAK, EGYPT.

With bated breath, and sudden, glad surprise,
I saw the glorious ruined temple rise
As if the earth, impulsive from her breast,
Had heaved it out, and left it there to rest.
A wilderness of ruins around me lay ;
Magnificence which words may not portray.
A huge propylon—shattered portico—
An obelisk above, the palm below,
And pylon after pylon tumbling down
And heaping up enormous cubes of stone.
Long colonades supporting roofs Titanic ;
With endless walls and obelisks of granite.
Here avenues from various points proceed
From thence to isolated portals lead.
—Yet silently amid the rubbish heaps
Of thousands of years, it stands in pride and keeps
Its awful dignity, and when, at night,
The mellow moon sheds down her tender light,
And hides in shadow all its sad decay
In glory clothing its humility—
Proudly it says : "Forever and for aye
I shall endure—the world has need of me."

SPRING WITHOUT HAROLD.

TO MRS. BELLE FOUTE.

The whole wide world is full
  Of a dreadful splendor ;
The trees like blossoming wool
  Stand white and slender.

Their shattering petals blow
  The garden over,
Pale as the lips we know
  The blossoms cover.

Oh, strange ineffable things
  Seem everywhere—
Alas ! the bluebird sings—
  And he not here !

The world is full of dreams
  And empty places.
All night the darkness teems
  With slumber faces.

All night the darkness throngs
  With yearning fancies,
'Tis drenched with silent songs
  And missing glances.

The little groping hands,
  The velvet lips
Have slipped from living hands
  To death's eclipse.

And all the world falls dull
  For one caress,
While life is oozing full
  Of emptiness.

WHITE POPPIES.

These are the poppies wild
That bloom so fair and mild
Above my slumbering child.

Ah ! sleep !
White poppies here are planted
Above thy grave ;
Sweet sleep—
More sweet than e'er was granted
Where eastern poppies wave.

Oh, far the time, and long agone
Since silence fell between us,
Yet shall no change but death alone
From thy dear memory wean us.

Ah ! rest !
Wake not to this cold world
Nor to its passion.
Lie thought caressed,
Where lily roots are curled
In mute compasion.

OBIT.

Morris Kilbourne, infant son of Mr. and Mrs. Morris Jouvenat, died February 23, 1898, at Winnesboro, La.

O, find some sweet and gentle spot
Beneath soft southern skies,
Where storms and blighting pains come not,
And only memories
Of his sweet life may fill the air ;
And lay his tender body there.

SWEET SIXTEEN.

To Miss Z. M., Dec. 8th, 1897.

This is the happy day
With gifts and graces gay,
That brings one household's queen,
Sweet Zelma, sweet sixteen,
  Plus one or two, may be,
    Stop me ere too late,
  For you clearly see
A kiss for every year,
May cost you very dear
    When thus we celebrate.

How soon affection learns
To wish you swift returns.
May no cloud intervene
To dim your sweet sixteen,
  Plus two, or three, or more,
    Needless to hesitate,
  But youth and love galore
We pledge with wine and rhyme,
And bless the golden time
    To-day we celebrate.

VOILA.

The autumn is here again, "Ma mie,"
  With its sun and rain and dew;
And the roses remember the springtime,
  And kiss their hands at you.

PRENDRE GARDE.

Quiver and ache and yearn,
  You who were merciless,
Stealthily breathe and turn
  Lest you your pain confess
She at your side serene ;—
  Ah ! could you know that she,
Groping her doubts between,
  Half dreams your perfidy.

Think of another face
  Eyes of deep anguished blue,
Brown hair and young lissom grace,
  Cheeks passion-pale for you.
She on another's arm—
  She, with her deep unrest.—
Ah, could you press that form
  Once to your longing breast?

Shudder, and writhe, and pray ;
  Think of the years to come ;
Think of your child at play
  There in your quiet home ;
Think of the words you have driven
  To some aching heart like a knife.
Go dream of an error forgiven
  And not of your neighbor's wife.

FUTILE.

O, empty world! how strange!
And full of dread.
The thought that he could change,
And be as dead;
That while the indignant blood
Through all my veins was flying
One hot, resentful flood;
Mine enemy was lying
Dying.

I had no wish of harm,
No thought of death,
I shrank beneath that arm,
That venomed breath
And only longed for peace;
I had no heart of grace
To pray for swift release,
Nor dreamed ought could displace
That dreaded face.

Are these the same sun-rays
That scorched me so?
The same harsh nights and days
That knew my woe?
Are these those walls of blight
That stood so seeming fair
Between me and the light?
Crushing in blank despair
My prayer.

O, empty world and vain,
No dire distress
To urge me or detain,
How purposeless!

Ah, wasted years!
Thy rosary be said
With humble tears,
Mine enemy from whom I fled
Is dead.

ADVICE FROM A "NEW" GRANDMOTHER.

What shall baby have to eat?
Rice and gravy or something sweet,
Soft-boiled egg and hot milk tea;
Ask his choice and you will see.
Buttered bread and marmalade
Is good enough if it can be had.
Fill him up to his baby throat
With new-drawn milk and sweetened oat,
And when you have a chicken stew
Give baby a drumstick bone to chew.
Give the children whatever they like,
From the horned moon to a tandem bike,
For no set rule will ever dispense
With the crying need of common sense.

INDEX.

After the Fire - - - - - 9
At Evening, - - - - - 12
A Valentine, - - - - - - 19
A Valentine with a Flower, - - - - 20
As a Bird, - - - - - - 33
An Old Dress—a Reverie, - - - - 24
April Musings, - - - - - 34
Ashes of Roses, - - - - - 38
Advice from a "New" Grandmother, - - - 53
Bon Silene Buds - - - - - 17
Baby John, - - - - - - 31
December, - - - - - - 10
Do You Care? - - - - - - 28
Exiles, - - - - - - 27
En Rapport, - - - - - - 21
Futile, - - - - - - - 52
Heart Hungry, - - - - - - 39
Illusions, - - - - - - 20
Imperishable Love, - - - - - 32
Karnak, Egypt, - - - - - 47
Little Bluebird, - - - - - - 29
Mignonette, - - - - - 14
Message of the Flowers, - - - - - 23
Mother's Rest, - - - - - 40
Memorial June, - - - - - 46
Neighbors, - - - - - - 7
Not To Be, - - - - - - 13
Neuralgia, - - - - - 21
Only a Thrush, - - - - - 11
O, Come Sweet Flower, - - - - 22
On the Beach, - - - - - 27
Our Nameless Nation, - - - - 18
Obit, - - - - - - 49
Post Prandial - - - - - 26
Prendre Garde, - - - - - 51
Pale Asphodels, - - - - - 42

INDEX.

"Robin's Awa," 12
Rest—A Sonnet, ... 13
Sunset, ... 15
Spring Without Harold, ... 48
Sorrow, ... 45
Silence, ... 43
Sweet Sixteen 50
To Loneliness, ... 16
To a Friend, ... 16
The Honey of Poison Flowers, ... 14
The Red, Red Rose, ... 30
Thou and I, ... 26
Three Nephews, ... 31
Two Little Granddaughters, ... 41
The Brotherhood of Man, ... 36
"Take Me" 44
The Star, ... 37
Texas (Nebulæ) 35
To Albyn, ... 42
Unsevered, ... 29
Valentine, ... 22
"Vers de Societe" 23
Vanished—A Dance Memory, ... 25
Voila, ... 50
White Poppies, ... 49
Your Picture, ... 28

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